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ABSTRACT

Research related to teacher stress and burnout has identified various factors related to stress in the areas of role conflict, job satisfaction, and role expectations. Two standardized measures, the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Stress Profile for Teachers by Wilson, were used to assess stress and burnout in 606 regular and special education teachers in Utah. Comparisons were also made between teachers on various demographic and job-related variables. Administrators rated those factors which teachers suggested as ways to reduce stress in the environment. A summary is presented of ideas for reducing paperwork, clarifying and enforcing discipline standards, and getting extra breaks and time. Tables present data summaries of empirical research on stress and burnout. A chart details findings from previous studies which provided the basis for current research on stress reduction. A list is also provided of teachers' suggestions of factors that would reduce stress and administrators' rating of feasibility for change. (JD)

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THE PRINCIPAL AS FACILITATOR IN REDUCING TEACHER STRESS

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During the past five years, the topic of stress and burnout has received considerable attention in education. McConaghy (1979) examined stress in teaching and found that the life expectancy of teachers to be four years lower than the national average. In a recent survey conducted in San Diego, California, Wilson (1979) found that 90% of all teachers polled feel some stress and 95% indicated the need for stress management courses. Fifty-six percent of 5,500 regular educators in a Chicago Teachers Union survey claim physical and/or mental illness as a direct result of their jobs (Walsh, 1979).

It has been suggested that special educators have even more potential for stress and burnout than regular educators because of their multifaceted roles with parents, support personnel, and children experiencing learning problems. (Weiskopf, 1980). However, little evidence exists to support this hypothesis. Sampling biases, low response rates, and the use of unreliable measures have plagued the few attempts which have been made to assess levels of burnout among special educators.

Additionally, few studies to date have identified factors demonstrating a strong relationship to on-the-job stress and burnout in teachers (Bensky, Shaw, Gouse, Dixon, & Beane, 1980; Needle, Griffin, & Svendsen, 1981; Petegrew & Wolf, 1982; Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982; Tosi & Tosi, 1970). Likewise, little systematic evidence exists as to teachers' perceptions of environmental factors which would reduce stress and burnout nor of

administrators' perceptions as to whether these factors are amenable to change within the educational setting. The paucity of research and the methodological problems existing in the literature underscore the need for such a systematic analysis.

Research on stress and burnout has typically been conducted through the use of survey questionnaires. Some of the questionnaires have been standardized; some have been a compilation of items developed by researchers; others were items selected from standardized questionnaires. An overview is presented in the paper of research which has identified factors more strongly related to stress and burnout than other factors and the particular groups of workers examined (Table 1).

One study which compared regular and special education teachers (N-114; convenience sample) was conducted by Bensky et al. (1980). Their results revealed that self-contained special education teachers experienced less stress than resource room or regular education teachers. Two variables were identified as being associated with stress: clear role expectations (r=-.40) and discrepancies in role expectatins (r=.35). These two variables in combination were found to contribute to only 19% of the variation in stress. The top five factors rated by each group of teachers as being the most stressful are contained in Table 1. Pupil load was considered more stressful for special educators in self-contained clases while diagnosis and assessment were ranked more stressful by resource room and regular education teachers.

Table 1

Summary of Empirical Research on Stress and Burnout

Non-Teachers

Author/Year	Sample	Method of Selection	Measure(s)	Outcomes
Hamner & Tosi, 1974	High Level Managers (N = 61)	Convenience	Composite questionnaire with items from Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman (1970) and Vroom (1963)	Job satisfaction and level of participation r = .32 Role ambiguity and level of perceived threat and anxiety r = .33
Armstrong, 1981	Child Abuse Workers and Ex-Workers (N = 162)	Purposive (97% response)	Researcher developed questionnaire and interview, examination of records.	Management process characteristics rated most frequently as stressful: 1) Inadequate leadership (differentiated workers from ex-workers) 2) Inadequate communication 3) Inadequate job autonomy 4) Inadequate supervision
Maslach & Jackson, 1981a, 1981b	Mental health workers, police officers, physicians, nurses, social service workers	Not reported	Maslach Burnout Inventory (1981a), questionnaire, Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) (Hackman & Oldham, 1974)	Mental Health Workers (N = 40) (ratings by co-workers): Physically fatigued EE[a] r = .42; Emotionally drained by job DP[b] r = .56; Complaints about clients DP r = .32 Social Service and Mental Health Workers (N = 91) (JDS): Feedback from job DP r = -.44, PA r = .38; Knowledge of results EE r = -.31, DP r = -.31; Meaningfulness of work DP r = -.32 Nurses, Social Service Workers, & Mental Health Workers (N = 180): Growth satisfaction (JDS) DP r = -.47, PA r = .41; Co-worker satisfaction with workers (ratings) DP r = -.41, PA r = .40 Police Officers (N = 142) (ratings by spouse): Upset and angry EE r = .34; Sees children as emotionally distant DP r = .32 Physicians (N = 43): Amount of direct contact with patients EE r = .31

[a]Emotional Exhaustion.

[b]Depersonalization.

[c]Personal Accomplishment.

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Table 1 (cont'd)

Teachers

Author/Year	Sample	Method of Selection	Measure(s)	Outcomes
Manera & Wright, 1980	Teachers and Administrators (N = 91)	Convenience	Researcher developed Q-sort task	Rank order of stressful events: 1) Time management 2) Individualized instruction 3) Judging people (e.g., student progress) 4) Professional growth 5) Personnel problems (e.g., in relation to interdisciplinary teaching, mainstreaming and special classes)
Young, 1980	Teachers (N = 747)	Purposive (50% response rate)	Modified Chicago Teaching Events Inventory	Rank order of stressful events (% of teachers reporting event) 1) Involuntarily transferred (5%) 2) Notification of unsatisfactory performance (7%) 3) Colleague assaulted in school (11%) 4) Managing disruptive children (75%) 5) Disagreement with supervisor (20%)
Tosi & Tosi, 1970	Elementary and secondary teachers (N = 68)	Convenience	Composite questionnaire with items from Vroom (1963) & Rizzo & House (1968)	Role conflict and job satisfaction r = -.48
Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982	Massachusetts teachers (N = 469)	Random selection from MTA membership list (64% response rate)	MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1978), Teacher Stress Survey (researcher developed) and Role Questionnaire (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970)	Role conflict a) MBI: Emotional Exhaustion r = .44 Depersonalization r = .30 Emotional Exhaustion - Set of background variables, role conflict and role ambiguity r = .21 b) Low levels of stress obtained; conclusions not supported by data
Needle, Griffin, & Svendsen, 1981	Minnesota teachers (N = 937)	Random (45% response rate)	Composite questionnaire with items from Quinn & Strain (1977), House, Wells, & McMichael (1979), Clark (1978), and Kyriacou & Sutcliff (1978)	r a) High discrepancy teachers* General well-being and somatic symptoms -.67 b) Low discrepancy teachers Satisfaction with job and general well-being .37 Relaxation .35 c) Specific problems confronting teachers and general well-being -.37 Somatic symptoms .32 Satisfaction with job -.37

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Table 1 (cont'd)

	Author/Year	Sample	Method of Selection	Measure(s)	Outcomes
Teachers	Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982	High and low stress junior and senior high school teachers (N = 264)	Purposive (60% response rate)	Teacher Stress, Pettegrew & Wolf (1980)	School stress and role-related factors — Eta^2 - Job satisfaction .47 - Role conflict .46 - Role overload .33 - Role ambiguity .23 - Nonparticipation .20 - Management style .24 Task-related factors - Student discipline .27 - Participation beyond normal working hours .25 Other Factors - Illness symptoms .22 - Life satisfaction .21
Special Education Teachers	Olson & Matusky, 1982	Specific Learning Disability Teachers (N = 173)	Convenience	Researcher developed and field tested questionnaire	Rank order of stressful events: 1) Excessive paperwork (educational system factor) 2) Inadequate salary (personal life factor) 3) Discipline of students (classroom factor) 4) Inadequate planning time (educational system factor) 5) Student attitudes (classroom factor) 6) Pupil-teacher ratio (classroom factor)
	Zabel & Zabel, 1981	Learning disability, educable mentally retarded, trainable mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, gifted. Multiply & severely handicapped, hearing impaired, & visually impaired (N = 601)	Random Convenience (79% response rate)	Maslach Burnout Inventory (1981a)	Low levels of burnout for all groups; no differences found for level of teaching (preschool to high school), model of service delivery or type of handicapping condition. No relationship found between demographic variables and subscales of MBI (r = -.14 to .27). Authors' conclusions not supported by data.

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Table 1 (cont'd)

Regular and Special Education Teachers

Author/Year	Sample	Method of Selection	Measure(s)	Outcomes
Bensky, Shaw, Gouse, Bates, Dixon, & Beane, 1980	Regular and special education teachers (N = 114)	Convenience	Researcher developed questionnaire	1) Self-contained special education teachers experienced less stress than resource room and regular teachers 2) Rank order of stressful events (top 5): Self-Contained Class Special Education Teachers 1. Pupil load 2. Teaching (preparation and implementation) 3. Job-related work after hours 4. Interaction with parents 5. Parent conferences Resource Room Special Education Teachers 1. Diagnosis and assessment 2. Pupil load 3. Teaching 4. Evaluation by supervisors 5. Job-related work after hours Regular Education Teachers 1. Diagnosis and assessment 2. Interaction with parents 3. Job-related work after hours 4. Parent conferences 5. Teaching 3) Stress and clear role expectations $r = -.40$ discrepancies of role $r_s = .35$ expectations $R^2 = .19$
D'Arienzo, Morocco, & Krajewski, 1982	Regular and special education teachers (N = 691)	Random (52% response rate)	Teacher Occupational Stress Factor Questionnaire (Clark, 1980)	1) Five factors identified from questionnaire: a) Financial Security, Working with Students and Task Overload were rated as "considerably stressful" b) Administrative Support and Relationship with Teachers were rated as "Somewhat Stressful" 2) Regression analyses using eight variables (obsessive-compulsive ideation, teacher belief systems, marital status, sex of principal, years teaching experience, special education teacher, type of school and school setting). None of the combination of variables contributed more than 9% of the variation in any one of the five factors. 3) Only "working with students" differentiated regular (considerably stressful rating) and special education teachers (somewhat stressful rating).
Meadow, 1981	Regular education teachers and deaf educators (teachers and administrators (N = 210)	Convenience	Maslach Burnout Inventory (1981a) and questionnaire	1) Both groups scored at the low burnout level. 2) No difference between groups. 3) No relationship between the demographic or job-related items and burnout. 4) Author's conclusions not supported by data.
Wilson, 1979, 1981	Regular and special education teachers (N = 405) (N = 151)	Not reported	Stress Profile for Teachers (Wilson, 1979)	1981: a) no difference between groups b) both groups scored in the moderate stress range c) Time Management subscale rated most frequently as contributing to stress d) Teacher/Teacher Relations and Employee/Administrator Relations rated most frequently as least stressful 1979: a) special education teachers scored 10 points higher than regular education teachers b) both groups scored in the moderate stress range

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Another study investigated perceived level of stress in a randomly selected sample of regular and special education teachers (N=691; 52% responses rate) using the Teacher Occupational Stress Factor Questionnaire (Clark, 1980). The researchers' analysis centered on five factors. Financial Security, Working with Students, and Task Overload were viewed as considerably stressful by teachers, while Administrative Support and Relationship with Teachers were perceived as somewhat stressful. Eight variables (obsessive-compulsive ideation, teacher belief systems, marital status, sex of principal, years teaching experience, special education teacher, type of school, and school setting) considered to be predictors of perceived stress were used in regression analyses for each of the five factors of stress. None of the combinations of variables contributed more than 9% of the variation in any one of the five factors.

Only one factor on the rating scale, "Working with Students" differentiated regular and special education teachers. Regular education teachers rated those items comprising the 'Working with Students' factor as considerably stressful whereas special education teachers rated those items as somewhat stressful. This factor also differentiated urban and suburban teachers as experiencing more stress than rural teachers; and junior high or middle school teachers as experiencing more stress than teachers of other grade levels. Responses to the Financial Security factor revealed that teachers with ten years or less experience reported higher levels of stress (considerably stressful) than teachers with more years of experience. The Task Overload factor

differentiated those teachers who taught at elementary level as more stressful than with teachers in other types of settings.

Regular education teachers and deaf educators (teachers and administrators combined; N=210; convenience sample) were compared in a study conducted by Meadow (1981) using the MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1981a). Both groups scored on all subscales of the MBI at the low burnout level. None of the job-related items or demographic characteristics employed in the the study were found to be related to stress and burnout. In this study the author's conclusions were not supported by the data.

Using the Stress Profile for Teachers (Wilson, 1979), Wilson (1981) compared regular and special education teachers. He found that overall both groups experienced moderate levels of stress, although there were no differences between the teachers. Comparison of the subscales of the Stress Profile for Teachers revealed that Time Management problems were rated most frequently as contributing to perceived stress while Teacher/Teacher Relations and Employee/Administrator Relations were considered least stressful aspects of the teachers' jobs. When elementary level teachers were compared to special education teachers, Time Management, Intrapersonal Conflict, Parent/Teacher Relations, Physical and Psychological Symptoms of Stress were ranked similarly. Middle school teachers, however, rated Student Behavior as the most stressful.

Additional stressors most frequently mention in reasearch studies include: time management, individualization of instruction, judging people (e.g., student progress) professional growth, personnel problems (e.g., interdisciplinary teaching,

mainstreaming, and special classes) (Manera & Wright, 1980); involuntary transfer, notification of unsatisfactory performance, colleague assaults, managing disruptive children, disagreement with supervisor (Young, 1980); excessive paperwork, inadequate salary, discipline of students, inadequate planning time, student attitudes, pupil-teacher ratio (Olsen & Matusky, 1982); and perceived lack of role definition and lack of role match with others, as well as, Time Management, Parent/Teacher Relations, Intrapersonal Conflict, and Student Behavior (Beasley, Myette, & Serna, 1983).

Strategies for Reducing Stress

Approaching the issue of stress from a different perspective, Kyriacou (1980) asked teachers to rank ways they had found most useful in reducing stress. Those strategies ranked by teachers as most helpful in reducing stress in their job situations included: keeping things in perspective, avoiding confrontations, relaxing after work, taking immediate action on situations, and keeping feelings under control.

Most school districts approach the topic of stress by utilizing an outside consultant who presents a two-hour or half-day workshop on the topic. Personal ways of coping with stress are addressed Generally these workshops provide excellent information and are enthusiastically received by the teachers. However, no follow-up is initiated to determine if teachers implement the stress management strategies. There is no data to support longitudinal effectiveness of this type of short-term intervention. Thus, it is probable that the effects of most

inservice workshops begin to diminish as soon as the consultant walks out the door.

It has been suggested that environmental factors may also have to be changed to reduce overall stress. Pettegrew and Wolf (1982) suggested that role-related stress, caused by incongruencies between teachers' role expectations and their actual experiences is the result of management practices. It is their belief that management's job is to assist workers in achieving a good person-environment fit; teachers' stress might be reduced significantly through improved management practices; and that working with school administrators would, therefore, be the most logical and cost-effective point of intervention into teacher stress. They conclude that individual coping interventions may be helpful for teachers in dealing with task-based problems that school administrators can and should address, however, will eventually lead to frustration.

Pearlin and Schooler (1978) also believe that personal coping efforts are least effective when jobs are impersonally organized and when impersonal forces affect people. Other coping interventions, such as social support aimed at changing the situation, are imporant in such situations. Both Pettegrew and Wolf (1982) and Pearlin and Schooler (1978) have recommended a shift in emphasis from personal management of stress to environmental management of stress, however, procedures to implement environmental change have been sparse.

Of the many studies conducted to identify stressful factors, only one has assessed whether those in control of the environment

(e.g., principals) could feasibly implement potential stress reduction strategies. (Beasley et al., 1983) attempted to determine the feasibility of reducing these stressful environmental factors. Teachers were asked to make three suggestions which, if implemented, could reduce stress in the work environment. Administrators were then asked to rate the feasibility accomplishing the changes.

The Role of the Principal in Reducing Environmental Stress

The building principal has consistently been identified as a key ingredient in a successful school. Principals of effective schools exhibit a core of common attitudes and leadership behaviors, such as supportiveness, tolerance, high expectations, orderliness, responsible instructional planning, and lear communication (Brandt, 1982; Lesley & Wayson, 1982; Sweeney, 1982). Within this list of general attitudes and behaviors are factors which can be critical in reducing job-related stress and the potential for burnout; thereby fostering individual and organizational mental health. Dixon, Shaw, and Bensky (1980) recommend that principals:

1. Diagnose the environmental conditions influencing the organization or individual.
2. Plan and design possible intervention strategies that focus on the stress conditions.
3. Implement appropriate change strategies aimed at eliminating or minimizing stress conditions.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and the mental health status of the organization or individual. (p. 32)

To summarize, it appears that although stress and burnout are considered critical problems in the work environment, research studies have been plagued with diversity of assessment measures, many of which have not been standardized. Those studies which employed standardized measures have obtained inconsistent results depending on the sample examined. Therefore, no clear differentiation between regular and special educators in perceived level of stress and burnout has been found.

Another problem has been that job-related characteristics have also varied in their relationship to stress and burnout. Physical fatigue, feedback on-the-job, job satisfaction, time management problems, and many others have been associated with stress. To date the only factors which have consistently demonstrated a moderate relationship with stress have been perceptions of role conflict, job satisfaction, and role expectations.

It was the intent of the present study to provide some consistency in the field by using standardized measures previously identified in the literature, namely the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (1981a) and the Stress Profile for Teachers (Wilson, 1979). Analyses were conducted to determine: (a) the extent of stress and burnout within these two groups, (b) the differential responses between regular and special education teachers, (c) whether teacher and classroom setting characteristics were associated with various levels of stress and burnout, (d) what teachers identified as ways to reduce stress and burnout, and (e) which of these suggestions made by teachers and administrators viewed as feasible to implement within their educational settings.

Finally, taking those suggestions viewed as feasible by administrators, a stress reduction model was developed using the principal as facilitator.

PROCEDURES

Sample

A random sample of Utah's secondary and elementary schools was drawn from the 1981 Utah School Directory. All special educators from each of the schools and an equal number of randomly selected regular educators were included in the study. 606 questionnaires were usable, resulting in an 81% return rate.

Instruments

The survey instruments consisted of: (a) the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), (2) the Stress Profile for Teachers by Wilson, and (3) a demographic and job-related questionnaire which included an open-ended question asking teachers to suggest ways stress could be reduced in the work environment.

A second questionnaire was sent to the administrators of each school which was included in the study. It was developed from the rank ordering of the suggestions teachers had made regarding stress reduction strategies. The administrators were asked to rate each item as easily done, possible but somewhat difficult, impossible, or facilitation not appropriate for my role. One hundred forty-five of the 190 administrators returned the survey for a 76% return rate.

Results and Discussion

There was virtually no difference in the level of burnout experienced by regular and special education teachers on the MBI. Both groups scored in the moderate range (Table 2). Examination of the ratings on the Stress Profile for Teachers (Table 3), likewise, reveals that no overall differences were found between the two groups and that both groups scored in the moderate range on this measure. Scores on the MBI indicate a mean of 35% responding in the moderate category (Table 4). Ratings on the Stress Profile for teachers revealed that 68% were experiencing moderate levels of stress (Table 5). Scores on the Teacher/Teacher Relations and Employee/Administrator Relation subscales of the Stress Profile for Teachers (Table 3) indicate that teachers did not perceive their colleagues or superiors as stressful. However, Time Management and Parent/Teacher/Relations were ranked first or second by both groups of educators.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) define burnout as high scores on the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization subscales and low scores on the Personal Accomplishment subscale. Even though a higher percentage of individuals were experiencing high levels of burnout in one or more of the six categories (Table 4), only 3.3% (N=20) of the sample fell within the Maslach and Jackson criteria. Of these repsondents, 15 were regular education teachers and 5 special education teachers. The high level respondents tended to be the youngest teachers (n=10) with 6 years of less experiences (n=11). Most of the high level responders (n=11) perceived their role as being cleary defined,

TABLE 2

Means and Standard Deviations
for Regular and Special Educators on the MBI

Frequency	Regular $\bar{x}$	Regular (SD)	Special $\bar{x}$	Special (SD)
Emotional Exhaustion	22.4	(11.4)	21.7	(10.6)
Depersonalization	7.9	(6.1)	6.7	(5.4)
Personal Accomplishment	37.9	(6.9)	38.5	(7.1)
Intensity				
Emotional Exhaustion	28.1	(12.9)	27.5	(12.6)
Depersonalization	10.2	(7.8)	9.0	(7.4)
Personal Accomplishment	39.1	(7.2)	39.7	(7.6)

Moderate Range: Frequency; EE, 18-29; DP, 6-11; PA, 34-39
Intensity; EE, 26-39; DP, 7-14; PA, 37-43

TABLE 3

Means and Standard Deviations
on the Stress Profile for Teachers

	Total $\bar{x}$	Regular $\bar{x}$	Special $\bar{x}$
Time management	12.0	12.6	11.5
Parent/teacher relations	11.9	11.4	12.4
Intrapersonal conflicts	11.0	11.1	10.8
Student behavior	10.9	10.8	11.0
Teacher/teacher relations	7.8	7.1	8.4
Employee/administrator relations	6.6	6.6	6.7
Physical symptoms of stress	11.1	11.4	10.9
Psychological/emotional symptoms of stress	10.4	10.5	10.3
Stress management techniques	9.6	9.6	9.7
TOTAL OVERALL STRESS SCORES	91.3	91.1	91.6

*Subtests ranked according to responses from total sample. Moderate range: 9-15

TABLE 4

MBI
Overall Percent of Responders
in the Low, Moderate, and High Categories
on the MBI

Frequency	Low	Moderate	High
Emotional Exhaustion	39	38	23
Depersonalization	45	38	17
Personal Accomplishment	49	30	21
Intensity			
Emotional Exhaustion	42	40	18
Depersonalization	43	33	25
Personal Accomplishment	23	35	32

TABLE 5

Overall Percent of Responders
in the Low, Moderate, and High Categories
on the Stress Profile for Teachers

	Low	Moderate	High
Time Management	15	66	19
Parent/teacher relations	11	82	7
Intrapersonal conflicts	18	75	7
Student Behavior	15	83	2
Teacher/teacher relations	64	35	1
Employee/administrator relations	79	20	1
Physical symptoms of stress	22	67	11
Psychological/emotional symptoms of stress	30	63	7
Stress management techniques	39	56	5
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	16	68	16

however, they did not perceive their principals' or peers' perception of their role as matching their perceptions (n=13, 8 regular education teachers). These high MBI responders also tended to score somewhat differently on the Stress Profile for Teachers (total X=107.0, SD=15.2) than the total sample (X=91.3 SD=18.7). For this group, the Parent/Teacher Relations subscale was ranked as more stressful which differed from the total sample which ranked Time Management problems as more stressful.

On the Stress Profile for Teachers (Wilson, 1979), a higher percentage of individuals responded in the high stress category (19%, N=115). Of those individuals who responded in the high stress category, 52% were regular educators (n=60) and 48% were special educators (n=55). Only a few items were responded to differently by the two groups. More special education teachers than regular education teachers did not perceive a role match with others in the work situation. Forty-four percent of the regular education teachers who reported that they did not exercise experienced high levels of stress whereas 40% of the special education teachers who reported exercising 20 minutes or less experienced high levels of stress. Proportional comparison of high stress responders to the total sample did not reveal any clear differences. These high responders on the Stress Profile for Teachers tended to score in the high burnout level on the Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the MBI. All other subscales were in the moderate range similar to the total sample.

Correlational Data

On the MBI scale, emotional exhaustion was moderately related to perceived lack of clear role definition and lack of role match with others and accounted for 20% or less of the variation for most teachers.

Data from the Stress Profile for Teachers revealed that perceived lack of clear role definition and lack of role match with others were the two factors to reveal demonstratable relationships for specific categories of special education teachers only (Table 6).

Regression Analyses

Regressions analyses were conducted for each of the subscales of the MBI and the Stress Profile for Teachers. Of particular interest in conducting the analyses was whether certain demographic and job related variables were more relevant for different types of teachers. None of the regression analyses for the total group of teachers, regular education teachers or special education teachers, using the demographic and job related variables accounted for more than 20% of the variation in any one subscale.

Feasibility of Reducing Stress Factors.

Table 7 lists those factors teachers suggested would reduce stress. Administrators were then asked to rate each of these items (easily done, possible but somewhat difficult, impossible, or facilitation not appropriate for my role). Responses were then ranked from most to least feasible to implement. "Smaller class loads" and "more preparation time" were suggested most frequently

Table 6

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Certain Job Related Variables and the Subscales of the Stress Profile for Teachers

	Lack of clear role definition				Lack of role match with others						No. of Students
	Teachers of MR	Teachers of BEH	Teachers of BEH/LD	All Special Education Teachers	Total Sample	All Special Education Teachers	Teachers of MR	Teachers of LD	Teachers of BEH	Teachers of BEH/LD	
Student Behavior											
Employee/Administrator Relations	.30		.30				.41*			.32	
Teacher/Teacher Relations					.34[a]	.33	.55*			.41*	-.35[c]
Time Management	.34		.44*								
Intrapersonal Conflict	.33	.33							.33		
Physical Symptoms of Stress		.38				.32		.35	.49*		.44[b]*
Psychological Symptoms of Stress		.30				.31			.39	.31	.48[b]*
Stress Management Techniques	.34	.33	.39	.33					.53*		
Total Stress Score	.34	.33	.37	.32	.31[a]	.37		.31	.48*	.30	

[a]Total sample.
[b]Teachers of MR.
[c]Teachers of BEH/LD.

Table 7

Teachers' Suggestions of Factors Which Would Reduce Stress and Administrators' Ratings of Feasibility for Change

	Teachers	Administrators	(Mean Ratings)
Smaller class load	1	14	(2.9)**
More preparation time	2	10.5	(2.5)
Fewer preparations per day	3	10.5	(2.5)
Reduced paperwork (required by district, state, federal levels)	4	12	(2.6)
Facilitate increased parent support	5	5.5	(1.7)
Fewer out-of-classroom duties (less duties, more short breaks)	6	9	(2.3)
Establishment of school standards to help with discipline problems (administrative support, alternatives for disruptive students)	7	3	(1.5)
More help and support from administration (clearly defined policies, better communication, more direction)	8	2	(1.4)
More aides	9	13	(2.7)
Increased facilitation of cooperation from other teachers	10	5.5	(1.7)
More pay	11	16*	(3.3)
Pay for additional work	12	18.5*	(3.1)
More classroom materials	13	7.5	(2.1)
Fewer extracurricular activities which require faculty attendance	14	7.5	(2.1)
Staff fitness programs at school	15	4	(1.6)
More breaks during the year rather than all summer	16	17*	(3.2)
Four-day week	17	18.5*	(3.3)
Mental health days for teachers never ill or a few unrestricted leave days	18	15*	(3.0)
Positive feedback from administrators	19	1	(1.2)

*Mode for these items = 4.

**Ratings: 1 = easily done, 2 = possible but somewhat difficult, 3 = impossible, 4 = facilitation not appropriate for my role.

by teachers as being the most likely ways to reduce stress in the school environment, whereas administrators ranked the "smaller class loads" fourteenth and "more preparation time" approximately tenth. Conversely, the top items ranked by administrators as easily done (e.g., "positive feedback," and "more help and support from administration") were ranked by teachers last (Rank=19) and eighth, respectively. The rankings by teachers and administrators were very dissimilar (Spearman rho=.07). Although the discrepancy between the two groups of educators was great, the impact of any changes made in the environment cannot be determined. That is, even though administrative support was not considered the most important factor in reducing stress, increased administrative support could possibly have significant impact on teachers' perceptions of the amount of stress in the school environment.

Current Research

The results of the feasibility survey indicated that administrators perceived 74% of the stress reduction strategies as manageable. The current research on the principal as facilitator in reducing environmental stress incorporates the feasibility survey and a consensus approach to development of stress management goals.

Approach

The nineteen items from the feasibility study were used as a basis for the development of the Environmental Stress Survey

(Appendix). Those items rated 3 or 4 (impossible or facilitation not appropriate for my role) were eliminated from the survey.

Five elementary schools were randomly selected from each of the three local school districts to serve as the control group. Two elementary schools volunteered to participate as the experimental schools.

All participating schools were given a battery of surveys during the first week of November 7, 1983. The surveys will be repeated the second week in May, 1984.

At each of the schools designated to receive the intervention, the following procedures have been implemented: (1) Using the results of the Environmental Stress Survey (Beasley, 1983) five factors receiving the highest ratings for contributing to stress were presented to faculty. (2) The faculty were then divided into small groups. Each stressor was listed on a separate piece of paper and each group was asked to generate ideas which could be utilized in their school to reduce stress. (3) The suggestions generated from each group were then summarized and presented to the principal. (4) Meetings were held between the principal and the researcher until a consensus was reached. A strategy was proposed for reducing stress in each of the identified areas. (5) These strategies were then presented to the faculty. (6) Adjustments were made. (7) The plan is now being implemented. (8) The plan will be evaluated and revised on a monthly basis.

Discussion

The identified stressors were similar for both schools (Table 8). Lack or preparation time ranked first and second, whereas, the number of subject matter preparations ranked third and fourth respectively. The ideas which were generated by the teachers and confirmed by the principal are summarized below:

Ideas for Reducing Paperwork:

1. The PTA will be approached about secretarial assistance before and after school.
2. The district will be requested to send clarification memos on new forms.
3. Ideas from teachers will be shared.

Ideas for Clarifying and Enforcing Discipline Standards:

1. School policies will be discussed, clarified, written, and posted.
2. Notes will be sent to parents reminding them of policies.

Ideas for Getting Extra Breaks and Time:

1. Teaming will be encouraged for recesses, art, music, physical education, thereby cutting down the number of preparations and increasing breaks.
2. Lunch hour storytellers from the PTA will be utilized during winter months.
3. A runner will be used to call classes for lunch.
4. Lock door to classroom.
5. Develop mini-workshops on time management, organization, etc.

TABLE 8

Rank Order of Environmental Stressors

School 1:

1. Lack of breaks from the classroom during the day contributes to my stress.
2. The lack of preparation time contributes to my stress.
3. The paperwork required by the district, state, and federal governments contributes to my stress.
4. The number of subject matter preparations contributes to my stress.
5. Ambiguous or unenforced school discipline standards contribute to my stress.

School 2:

1. Lack of preparation time contributes to my stress.
2. Extra out-of-classroom duties contribute to my stress.
3. The number of subject matter preparations contributes my stress.
4. Lack of breaks from the classroom during the day contributes to my stress.
5. The paperwork required by the district, state, and federal governments contributes to my stress.

Ideas for Reducing Extra Curricular Activities:

1. A yes/no sign will be developed to announce faculty meetings.

2. Surveys and memos will be used.

Each of these implemented changes will now be evaluated on a monthly basis to determine if the principal is maintaining the plan. Additionally, each principal was given a reinforcement checklist. He will determine a goal for the type and amount of positive feedback to be given the faculty, and evaluate the accomplishment of that goal by recording on the checklist.

SUMMARYS

In this study two standardized measures were used to assess stress and burnout in regular and special education teachers. Comparisons were also made between teachers on various demographic and job-related variables. Administrators were asked to rate those factors which teachers had suggested as ways to reduce stress in the environment. This feasibility survey was then used as a basis for the current research.

Even though not all of the variables identified in the literature were examined in this study, our results do address some of the issues and variables previously cited:

1. In this study no difference was found between regular and special educators, both were experiencing moderate levels of stress and burnout.

2. Sixty-five percent of the total sample were experienceing moderate levels of stress, nineteen percent high levels of stress, thirty-five percent moderate levels of burnout, and 3.3 percent high levels. These results do not confirm the earlier

hypothesis that special education teachers experience more stress and burnout than regular educators. (Meadow, 1981).

3. Role match, lack of clear role definition, and number of students demonstrated a strong relationship with three categories of special education teachers, only.

4. Seventy-four percent of stress reduction strategies suggested by teachers were perceived as manageable by the administrators.

5. Administrator's ratings of the feasibility of changing the environment to reduce stress for teachers demonstrated the large discrepancy that exists in relation to the perceptions of workers and managerial level staff.

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APPENDIX

ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS SURVEY

Carol R. Beasley

The purpose of this survey is to discover which environmental factors are significantly contributing to teacher stress factors which the principal has no control over, such as size of class load, have been eliminated from the survey.

On the following page, there are 16 statements. Rate each statement from 0 to 6.

A rating of 0 indicates - this statement never contributes to your stress.

A rating of 1 indicates - this statement very mildly, rarely, contributes to your stress.

A rating of 2 indicates - this statement mildly, once in a while, contributes to my stress.

A rating between 3 and 5 indicates - this statement moderately contributes to your stress.

A rating of 6 indicates - this statement significantly contributes to my stress.

0 (Never) does not	1 very mild	2	3	4	5	6
			moderately			significantly

	Rating 0-6	
(56) 1.	_____	The lack of preparation time contributes to my stress.
(57) 2.	_____	The number of subject matter preparations contributes to my stress.
(58) 3.	_____	The paperwork required by the district, state and federal governments contributes to my stress.
(59) 4.	_____	The lack of parental support contributes to my stress.
(60) 5.	_____	Extra out-of-classroom duties contribute to my stress.
(61) 6.	_____	Lack of breaks from the classroom during the day contributes to my stress.
(62) 7.	_____	Ambiguous or unenforced school discipline standards contribute to my stress.
(63) 8.	_____	Ambiguous policies from the amdinistration contribute to my stress.

0 (Never) does not	1 very mildly	2	3 moderately	4	5	6 significantly

(64) 9. _____ Lack of help and support from the administration contributes to my stress.

(65) 10. _____ Lack of communication and clear direction contributes to my stress.

(66) 11. _____ Lack of classroom help such as aides contribute to my stress.

(67) 12. _____ Lack of cooperation from other teachers contribute to my stress.

(68) 13. _____ Lack of classroom materials contribute to my stress.

(69) 14. _____ Extra curricula activities which require my attendance contribute to my stress.

(70) 15. _____ Lack of positive feedback from my principal contribute to my stress.

(71) 16. _____ Lack of fitness programs at work is contributing to my inability to cope with other stressors.

Record and rate any additional environmental factors which may contribute to your stress. List only those that your principal has control over.

	Rating	Statement
1.	_____	_____
		_____
2.	_____	_____
		_____
3.	_____	_____
		_____